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ABSTRACT

Following R. M. Kanter's (1977) conceptualization of females as tokens and extension of this conceptualization to males, this study hypothesized that attitudes of male teachers would be significantly related to the principal's gender. A significant interaction between the principal's gender, the teacher's gender, and the teacher's administrative position was expected in explaining attitudes and work orientations. A questionnaire was administered to secondary school administrators and teachers (N=415) in a medium-sized industrial town in Israel. Findings of a three-way analysis of covariance suggested that principals' gender has a significantly greater effect on teachers' attitudes than does teachers' own gender; differences in the present school climate and in leadership styles also depend more on the principals' gender than on that of the teachers. Both male and female teachers' experience of working under female principals differs from that of working under male principals; under male principals, all teachers have more seniority and higher professional rank than under female principals. Under female principals, all teachers, both male and female, with or without an administrative position, express more positive attitudes toward their workplace than under male principals. Male teachers without an administrative position, whether under a male or a female principal, proved to be the most disadvantaged group. (LL)

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PRINCIPALS' GENDER AND WORK ORIENTATIONS OF MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, April, 1992.

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PRINCIPALS' GENDER AND WORK ORIENTATIONS OF MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS

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Background

Schools are complex organizations whose operation and performance are influenced to a great extent by the relations between the principal, the teachers and the students. Of special significance is the principal, who shapes and articulates the school climate and mission. Furthermore, the principal as an instructional leader has the responsibility of seeking, modeling, shaping, developing, rewarding and institutionalizing norms of collegiality and mutual respect while fostering professional development and shared ownership (Barth, 1989).

Teachers' views of the principal have a significant effect on their attitudes towards the workplace, on their performance at school and on the principal's capacity as a leader (Johnson, 1990). Lee, Dedrick and Smith (1991) recently indicated that teachers' positive evaluation of the principal's leadership contributes to their efficacy and sense of satisfaction. It was also indicated that the principal's gender probably has an effect on teachers' attitudes and behavior in their workplace (Charters & Jovick, 1981).

The process of feminization of both the teacher and the administrative labor force can therefore change teachers' and administrators' interaction. Israel seems to be a proper place to study the effects of this process on labor relations in the school, as the Israeli educational system is undergoing rapid feminization. The percentage of females increased from 75.2% in 1972 to 82.2% in 1983 among elementary teachers, and from 53.2% in 1972 to 61% in 1983 among secondary school teachers. The percentage of female principals in elementary schools in 1972

was 20.8% and 43.4% in 1983. In secondary schools, the respective percentages were 13.8% in 1972 and 27.5% in 1983 (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 1979, 1987). This rapid process of feminization is associated with a steady decline in the occupational prestige of both teachers and principals (Addi, 1992), which, in the case of the principal, could hamper his/her authority and effectiveness. Moreover, both male and female teachers may be less inclined to accept the authority of a female principal. The purpose of this paper is to explore the views of male and female teachers concerning the school principal and the workplace and how these views are affected by the principal's gender, at times of rapid change in the gender composition of the school labor force.

The Cross Effects of Principals' and Teachers' Gender

Shakeshaft (1987) concludes her book on women in educational administration by claiming that teachers prefer male to female principals. When women overcome traditional barriers and attain authority positions like school principalship, they are viewed as less powerful than men in comparable positions (Nieva & Gutek, 1982). Moreover, males tend to find it especially difficult to work under female principals, as this arrangement places them in a non-conventional relationship with authority (Basse, Krussell & Alexander, 1971; Ortiz & Marshall, 1988). Petty and Lee (1975) reported long ago that male subordinates under female supervision are less satisfied than any other combination of male and female authority interaction. Moreover, male teachers are prejudiced against female administrators (Fishel & Potter, 1975; Ortiz & Marshall, 1988). According to these studies, male teachers report more positive interactions and communications with male than with female principals (Gilberston, 1981); or, as recently indicated by Cioci, Lee and Smith (1991): "Male and female teachers experience different levels of empowerment, depending on... whether they work with a female or a male principal" (p. 20). While men and women resemble each other in their sense of empowerment in almost all domains when working for a man, men feel less empowered than women when working for a woman.

These conclusions differ from Fairhust and Snavely's (1983), who report that men in female-dominated occupations enjoy a relatively superior status and better chances for advancement than women. Wharton and Baron (1987) also indicate that males in female-dominated workplaces, report high levels of job satisfaction.

Probably to rationalize a low prestige and underpaid job, female principals have a stronger positive effect upon the functioning of the school staff when compared with male principals. They contribute to teacher performance and student achievements more than do male principals. Teachers under female principals are more satisfied and more closely involved in school affairs than under male supervision. This is due to the fact that female principals are more often involved in both participatory and supervisory activities than male principals. Compared with males, female principals are more concerned with the instructional process; they interact more intensively with teachers in dealing with daily school affairs, rather than with long-term organizational issues (Gilberston, 1981; Charters & Jovick, 1981; Ortiz & Marshall, 1988).

A recent review of research studies states that "Valued female administrators' attributes include concern for others, a great focus on teaching and learning, a more democratic and participative style, greater effectiveness in representing the school, and working with the community" (Sadker, Sadker & Klein, 1991, p. 284).

It seems that the contrasting findings of the various studies concerning the differential effects of the principal's gender on attitudes and work orientations of male and female teachers, can be clarified by Kanter's (1977) concept of tokens.

Are Male Teachers in a Female Dominated Workplace Gender Tokens?

According to Kanter (1977), if in a certain workplace or occupation less than 15% of the relevant labor force is represented by either one of the sexes, that group may be defined as a token group. As such, it may be perceived as different in various domains compared with the locally dominant group. Cassidy and Warren (1991) define a female in a male-dominated workplace as

possessing an inconsistent status constellation. For females in this position it is hard to establish themselves as competent workers, to have access to informal networks of information, to enter into the formal power structure of the occupation and to enjoy proper job satisfaction, when compared with females in a female-dominated workplace. These findings are consistent with many others which indicate the negative effect of the female token condition, compared to the positive effect of being a female in a female-dominated occupation or workplace.

However, it does not necessarily hold in the case of men constituting the minority group in a feminized workplace. Since males, as opposed to females, constitute the dominant superordinate group in society, token males may experience the negative condition of being tokens in different way than females (who constitute the subordinate group in society at large) (Yonder, 1991; Yonder, 1985; Fairhust & Snavely, 1983; Bhatengar, 1988; Dworkin, Chafetz & Dworkin, 1986). In the light of this observation, Alexander and Thoist (1985) suggested that Kanter's concept of tokens be modified. Similarly, Floge and Merrill (1986) wrote that "the status characteristics of token and of dominant groups needs to be taken into consideration, as well as occupational and organizational characteristics" (p. 946).

According to Reskin (1988), men resist women as equal partners in work situations because doing so undermines traditional occupational differentiations and male dominance. Thus, as superior partners in a female-dominated workplace, men can assert their status by holding leadership and administrative positions. Such a position grants them a superordinate status within the female-dominated workplace which corresponds to their status in society at large. As mentioned by Macke (1981), "occupational role saliency (such as supervision) can compensate male tokens for the negative effects of being a small minority in female-dominant occupations". Therefore, it is presently assumed that the attitude of males as a token group in the Israeli educational system, depends not only on their general characterization as tokens, but also on their relative authority position in the workplace. Male teachers with an administrative position presumably behave significantly different from regular teachers. Following Kanter's conceptualization of females as tokens and its extension to males, it is hypothesized that attitudes of

male teachers are significantly related to their principal's gender and their administrative position in school. A significant interaction between the principal's gender, the teacher's gender and the administrative position is expected, in explaining attitudes and work orientations. Male teachers with an administrative assignment under male leadership will score relatively high on various scales, while male teachers under female principals but without administrative authority, will score lowest. Female teachers with or without an administrative function, are expected to have scores ranging between the two groups of male teachers.

Methodology

An anonymous questionnaire was administered to all secondary school administrators and teachers in a medium-sized industrial town in Israel. About 415 respondents returned the questionnaire (47% response rate). The sample consists of 84% females and 16% males. Out of 17 school principals, 6 (35%) are males.

Two sets of variables were examined. The first set measures the professional standing of the respondents as indicated by academic degree (1 - no academic degree to 4 - M.A. or Ph.D.) and seniority. The second set measures the respondents' orientations to their workplace by 4 seven-point Likert scales. The first scale indicates job satisfaction (4 items, e.g., "If I had to start again, I would choose to be a teacher", α=.70). The second scale measures cooperation with school management (3 items, e.g., "Administration involves teachers in making school policy", α=.68). The third scale measures collegiality (6 items, e.g., "Teachers' cooperate with one another", α=.67), and the fourth scale is about instructional difficulties (14 items, e.g., "The diversity in learning abilities of my classroom students makes instruction very difficult", α=.70).

Three-way analysis of covariance is employed to measure the interaction effects of teacher's gender, principal's gender, and administrative position on the respondents' orientations toward their work and workplace.

Results

Table 1 describes the distribution of the teachers by their and their principal's gender and administrative position.

Insert Table 1 here

The findings of Table 1 indicate that among regular teachers, the percentage of males is 15.0%, while among administrators it is 18.3%. These differences in percentage are small and it seems that male teachers are represented in various levels of the educational hierarchy in proportions similar to females. The main assumption that male teachers have better opportunities for advancement in a female dominated workplace than in others was not confirmed. Some differences between male and female teachers appear when the principal's gender is being considered. Most of the male teachers (72%) work under male principals who constitute only a third of all principals: male teachers strongly prefer male principals. Male teachers constitute only 7% of the teaching body under female principals. It seems that schools with female principals are practically fully feminized workplaces, while schools with a male principal are only partially feminized.

The findings also indicate that only 11 male teachers (or 17% of all males in the sample) can be defined as gender tokens: they work as regular teachers, without any administrative job, in a female-dominated workplace and under a female principal.

Means and standard deviations of the teachers' professional rank by their and their principal's gender and by occupying a part-time administrative position, are presented in Table 2. Table 3 specifies the F-values of the three-way analysis of variance of Table 2.

Insert Tables 2 and 3 here

The results of a three-way analysis of variance, as presented in Tables 2 and 3, indicate that the teachers' professional rank and their job seniority are directly related to their principal's gender and to their administrative position. Only once, a two-way interaction turned out to be statistically significant: teacher's and principal's gender interacted with teacher's professional rank. Female teachers under male principals have the highest professional rank ($\bar{X}$ = 3.37 and 3.01), while male teachers under male principals have the lowest ($\bar{X}$ = 2.72 and 2.26). Male and female teachers, under female principals occupy in-between positions. In addition, male and female teachers under male principals have significantly longer teaching experience than teachers under female principals. The overall average of years of teaching under male principals is 16.4, while under female principals it is 12.1. Finally, both male and female teachers with a part-time administrative job have a significantly higher professional rank and much longer work experience, compared with teachers without such a job.

The findings in Table 4 and Table 5 refer to a three-way analysis of covariance of teachers' work orientation after controlling for their professional rank and seniority.

Insert Tables 4 and 5 here

The findings show again that in practice, the independent variables have practically only main effects on teachers' work orientations. Only once, a three-way interaction is significantly related to instructional difficulties. The interaction effect shows that male teachers without an administrative job under male principals have more instructional difficulties than any other group of teachers ($\bar{X}$ = 3.59). Contrary to the main hypothesis of the study, no other significant interaction effect between the three independent variables - principals' and teachers' gender and administrative position - was indicated. More significant differences were indicated between male and female principals than in any comparison in regard to teacher characteristics and work orientations. Teachers under female principals report that they cooperate much more with school management,

behave friendlier with one another and are more satisfied in their jobs, than other teachers under male principals. But both male and female teachers are affected by their principal's gender in similar ways. Furthermore, the findings indicate that male teachers differ from their female colleagues in their perception of instructional difficulties and collegiality. Male teachers reported more instructional difficulties and less collegiality than female teachers, regardless of the principal's gender. It was also found that teachers with an administrative position cooperate with management significantly more than teachers without it.

Discussion

The present research deals with some consequences of the rapid feminization of the teaching and administrative labor force in the Israeli educational system on the attitudes of male and female teachers working under either male or female school principals.

The findings partially confirm Kanter's theory of gender tokens when applied to males in feminized work places. First of all, male teachers try as much as possible to avoid token status. Only 17% of male teachers work in schools where the principal and most of the staff are females. Male teachers report, as expected by Kanter's hypothesis, less collegiality and more instructional difficulties than their female colleagues. However, the principals' gender has a significantly greater effect on teachers' attitudes than their own gender. Working under female principals is experienced differently by both male and female teachers from working under male principals.

Under male principals, all teachers have more seniority and higher professional rank than under female principals. However, under female principals, all teachers, both male and female, with or without an administrative position, express more positive attitudes toward their workplace, than under male principals.

Our findings indicate, contrary to Kanter's hypothesis, that differences in the present school climate and in leadership styles depend more on the principals' gender than on that of the teachers.

The hypothesized relatively high position of male teachers in the feminized workplace in general, and under male principals in particular, was not confirmed. Holding a part-time administrative position had no effect on either male or female work orientations, except in one case. Male teachers without an administrative position, whether under a male or under a female principal, proved to be the most disadvantaged group. They reported having many instructional difficulties. This finding suggests that a process of negative selection indicates the token position of males in the feminized workplace. Only a very small number of male teachers are employed in such schools. Male teachers tend to avoid such workplaces especially if they do not get an administrative function or when the schools have a female principal. It seems that the decision of this small group of male teachers to nevertheless work in the school is for lack of a better choice, and their reported relatively high job satisfaction is indeed a rationalization to justify a no-choice condition, as suggested by Wharton and Baron (1987).

The conflicting evidence concerning the conditions of males in a female-dominated workplace probably results in part from methodological difficulties. It is too difficult to properly control for the process of negative selection which hampers the experimental validity of survey studies (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). It is also difficult to explain the behavior and attitudes of a very small minority negatively selected of experienced male teachers who are deprived of any administrative position, work under a female principal, complain about excessive instructional difficulties and report levels of job satisfaction similar to those of as any other group of teachers. Their very small number suggests that only very few male teachers agree with such working conditions in the rapidly feminizing workplace. Their small number is probably a better indication of the poor state of the male token than their declared job satisfaction and their overall similarity in behavior and attitudes to other teachers.

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Table 1

Distribution of Secondary School Teachers by Principal Gender, Teacher Gender and Administrative Position

		Male Principal		Female Principal	
		Male Teacher	Female Teacher	Male Teacher	Female Teacher
With admin. position	N	12	16	7	71
	%	25.5	18.4	38.9	27.5
Without admin. position	N	35	71	11	187
	%	74.5	81.6	61.1	72.5
Total	N	47	87	18	258
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations (in parenthesis) of Teacher Professional Rank by Principal Gender, Teacher Gender and Administrative Position

	Group Means and S.D.	
	Professional Rank	Seniority
Male Principal		
Male teacher		
With admin. position	2.72 (.90)	22.25 (8.22)
Without admin. position	2.26 (.96)	16.14 (8.96)
Female Teacher		
With admin. position	3.37 (.50)	18.75 (5.48)
Without admin. position	3.01 (.71)	14.97 (8.82)
Female Principal		
Male Teacher		
With admin. position	3.28 (.75)	16.71 (6.04)
Without admin. position	2.73 (.90)	12.18 (9.14)
Female Teacher		
With admin. position	2.84 (.77)	16.79 (8.93)
Without admin. position	2.44 (.92)	10.92 (7.85)

Table 3

F-Values: Three-Way Analysis of Variance of Teacher Professional Rank

	F Values	
	Professional Rank	Seniority
Main Effects		
Teacher gender	7.42*	1.39
Principal gender	15.62*	17.02*
Admin. position	17.72*	36.22*
Interaction Effects		
Teacher x principal	15.74*	.20
Teacher x position	.21	.26
Position x principal	.04	.25
Position x principal x teacher	.01	.87

*p<.05

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations (in parenthesis) of Teacher Attitudes by Principal Gender, Teacher Gender and Administrative Position

	Group Means and S.D.			
	Instructional Difficulties	Cooperation with Management	Sense of Collegiality	Job Satisfaction
Male Principal				
Male Teacher				
With adm. position	3.13 (.81)	4.77 (1.18)	5.29 (.74)	2.94 (1.01)
Without adm. position	3.59 (.71)	4.64 (1.75)	4.75 (1.00)	3.71 (1.64)
Female Teacher				
With adm. position	2.50 (.73)	5.06 (1.07)	5.48 (1.05)	4.53 (1.93)
Without adm. position	2.75 (.89)	4.81 (1.31)	5.36 (.96)	3.80 (1.43)
Female Principal				
Male Teacher				
With adm. position	3.09 (1.20)	6.07 (.83)	5.62 (.65)	3.63 (1.09)
Without adm. position	3.42 (1.04)	5.27 (.96)	5.13 (.70)	4.00 (1.55)
Female Teacher				
With adm. position	2.71 (.84)	5.92 (1.00)	5.44 (.99)	4.52 (1.59)
Without adm. position	2.67 (.84)	5.74 (1.10)	5.55 (.93)	4.28 (1.47)

Table 5

F-Values: A Three-Way Analysis of Covariance of Teacher Attitudes

	F Values			
	Instructional Difficulties	Cooperation with Management	Sense of Collegiality	Job Satisfaction
Covariance				
Educational level	1.40	.28	2.42	.88
Seniority	2.65	.03	.13	1.78
Main Effects				
Teacher gender	21.53*	2.06	8.43*	3.58
Principal gender	1.24	47.67*	5.09*	5.41*
Adm. position	.84	3.33**	.07	.38
Interaction				
Teacher x principal	.05	.08	.35	.31
Teacher x adm.	1.23	1.74	2.63	1.56
Adm. x principal	.04	.31	.41	.01
Teacher x principal x adm. position	4.53*	.58	.01	1.75

*p<.05